PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION

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In the year 1885 an edition was printed at Bombay by Mr. Tookaram Tatya, a Fellow of the Theosophical Society, which has been since widely circulated among its members in all parts of the world. But it has been of use only to those who had enough acquaintance with the Indian system of philosophy to enable them to grasp the real meaning of the Aphorisms notwithstanding the great and peculiar obstacles due to the numberless brackets and interpolated sentences with which not only are the Aphorisms crowded, but the so-called explanatory notes as well. For the greater number of readers these difficulties have been an almost insurmountable barrier; and such is the consideration that has led to the preparation of this edition, which attempts to clear up a work that is thought to be of great value to earnest students.

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charge would be true. Instead of this being a translation, it is offered as an interpretation, as the thought of Patanjali clothed in our language. No liberties have been taken with the system of the great Sage, but the endeavor has been faithfully to interpret it to Western minds unfamiliar with the Hindu modes of expression, and equally unaccustomed to their philosophy and logic.

About Patanjali's life very little, if anything, can be said. In the *Rudra Jamala*, the *Vrihannaradikeshwara* and the *Padma-Purana* are some meagre statements, more or less legendary, relating to his birth. Ilavrita-Varsha is said to have been his birthplace, his mother being Kati the wife of Angira. The tradition runs that upon his birth he made known things past, present and future, showing the intellect and penetration of a sage while yet an infant. He is said to have married one Lolupa, whom he found in the hollow of a tree on the north of Sumeru, and thereafter to have lived to a great age. On one occasion, being insulted by the inhabitants of Bhotabhandra while he was engaged in religious austerities, he reduced them to ashes by fire from his mouth.

That these accounts are legendary and symbolical can be easily seen. Ilavrita-Varsha is no part of India, but is some celestial abode. The name of India proper is Bharata Varsha. "In it and nowhere else do the four ages or

Yugas—Krita, Treta, Dwapara and Kali—exist. Here dwelling perform meritorious and private sacrifice. In this country Bharata is the great sacrificial division; for this is the land of works, while the others are places of enjoyment." In the foregoing Purana it is said: "Of the Varshas, Bharata alone is the land of works; the other eight (including Hiranyaka-Varsha) are places where the celestials enjoy the remaining rewards of their works." As Bharata-Varsha is a division of Jambudwipa, and known as India, and the other Varshas are for celestials, it follows that the account of Patanjali's birth-place cannot be relied upon in a material sense. It may be the ancient method of showing how great sages now and then descend from other spheres to aid and benefit man. But there is also another Patanjali mentioned in the Indian books. He was born in India at Gonarda, in the east, and from there he went to reside temporarily in Kashmir. Prof. Bhandarkar has reminded that this later Patanjali wrote about 140 B. C. His writings were commentaries upon the great grammarian Panini, and it is in regard to the Sanskrit language that he is regarded as an authority. He must not be confounded with our Patanjali; of the latter all that we have is the Philosophy set forth in the Aphorisms.

In regard to the systems of Yoga, we cannot do better than to quote some introductory re-

marks made by Col. H. S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, in the Bombay edition of these Aphorisms, in August, 1885. He said:

"The Yoga system is divided into two principal parts—Hatha and Raja Yoga. There are many minor divisions which can be brought under either of these heads. Hatha Yoga was promoted and practised by Matsendra Nath and Goraksh Nath and their followers, and by many sects of ascetics in this country (India). This system deals principally with the physiological part of man with a view to establish his health and train his will. The processes prescribed to arrive at this end are so difficult that only a few resolute souls go through all the stages of its practice, while many have failed and died in the attempt. It is therefore strongly denounced by all the philosophers. The most illustrious Sankarâchârya has remarked in his treatise called Aparokshanubhuti that 'the system of Hatha Yoga was intended for those whose worldly desires are not pacified or uprooted.' He has strongly spoken elsewhere against this practice.

"On the other hand, the Raja Yogis try to control the mind itself by following the rules laid down by the greatest of adepts."

Patanjali's rules compel the student not only to acquire a right knowledge of what is and what is not real, but also to practice all virtues, and while results in the way of psychic development are not so immediately seen as in the case of the successful practitioner of Hatha Yoga, it is infinitely safer and is certainly spiritual, which Hatha Yoga is not. In Patanjali's Aphorisms there is some slight allusion to the practices of Hatha Yoga, such as "postures," each of which is more difficult than those preceding, and "retention of breath," but he distinctly says that mortification and other practices are either for the purpose of extenuating certain mental afflictions or for the more easy attainment of concentration of mind.

In Hatha Yoga practice, on the contrary, the result is psychic development at the delay or expense of the spiritual nature. These last named practices and results may allure the Western student, but from our knowledge of inherent racial difficulties there is not much fear that many will persist in them.

This book is meant for sincere students, and especially for those who have some glimmering of what Krishna meant, when in Bhagavad-Gita he said, that after a while spiritual knowledge grows up within and illuminates with its rays all subjects and objects. Students of the mere forms of Sanscrit who look for new renderings or laborious attempts at altering the meaning of words and sentences will find nothing between these covers.

It should be ever borne in mind that Patan-

jali had no need to assert or enforce the doctrine of reincarnation. That is assumed all through the Aphorisms. That it could be doubted, or need any reinforcement, never occurred to him, and by us it is alluded to, not because we have the smallest doubt of its truth, but only because we see about us those who never heard of such a doctrine, who, educated under the frightful dogmas of Christian priestcraft, imagine that upon quitting this life they will enjoy heaven or be damned eternally, and who not once pause to ask where was their soul before it came into the present body.

Without Reincarnation Patanjali's Aphorisms are worthless. Take No. 18, Book III., which declares that the ascetic can know what were his previous incarnations with all their circumstances; or No. 13, Book II., that while there is a root of works there is fructification in rank and years and experience. Both of these infer reincarnation. In Aphorism 8, Book IV., reincarnation is a necessity. The manifestation, in any incarnation, of the effects of mental deposits made in previous lives, is declared to ensue upon the obtaining of just the kind of bodily and mental frame, constitution and environment as will bring them out. Where were these deposits received if not in preceding lives on earth —or even if on other planets, it is still reincarnation. And so on all through the Aphorisms this law is tacitly admitted.

In order to understand the system expounded in this book it is also necessary to admit the existence of soul, and the comparative unimportance of the body in which it dwells. For Patanjali holds that Nature exists for the soul's sake, taking it for granted that the student believes in the existence of soul. Hence he does not go into proof of that which in his day was admitted on every hand. And, as he lays down that the real experiencer and knower is the soul and not the mind, it follows that the Mind, designated either as "internal organ," or "thinking principle," while higher and more subtle than the body, is yet only an instrument used by the Soul in gaining experience, just in the same way as an astronomer uses his telescope for acquiring information respecting the heavens. But the Mind is a most important factor in the pursuit of concentration; one indeed without which concentration cannot be obtained, and therefore we see in the first book that to this subject Patanjali devotes attention. He shows that the mind is, as he terms it, "modified" by any object or subject brought before it, or to which it is directed. This may be well illustrated by quoting a passage from the commentator, who says: "The internal organ is there"—in the *Vedanta Paribhasha*—"compared to water in respect of its readiness to adapt itself to the form of whatever mould it may enter. 'As the waters of a reservoir, having is-

ened from an aperture, having entered by a channel the basins, become four-cornered or otherwise shaped, just like them; so the manifesting internal organ having gone through the sight, or other channel, to where there is one object, for instance a jar, becomes modified by the form of the jar or other object. It is this altered state of the internal organ—or mind—that is called its modification.'" While the internal organ thus moulds itself upon the object it at the same time reflects it and its properties to the soul. The channels by which the mind is held to go out to an object or subject, are the organs of sight, touch, taste, hearing and so on. Hence by means of hearing it shapes itself into the form of the idea which may be given in speech, or by means of the eye in reading, it is moulded into the form of that which is read; again, sensations such as heat and cold modify it directly and indirectly by association and by recollection, and similarly in the case of all senses and sensations.

It is further held that this internal organ, while having an innate disposition to assume some modification or other depending upon constantly recurring objects—whether directly present or only such as arise from the power of reproducing thoughts, whether by association or otherwise, may be controlled and stilled into a state of absolute calmness. This is what he means by "hindering the modifications." And just here it is

seen that the theory of the soul's being the real experiencer and knower is necessary. For if we are but mind, or the slaves of mind, we never can attain real knowledge because the incessant panorama of objects eternally modifies that mind which is uncontrolled by the soul, always preventing real knowledge from being acquired. But as the Soul is held to be superior to Mind, it has the power to grasp and hold the latter if we but use the will to aid it in the work, and then only the real end and purpose of mind is brought about.

These propositions imply that the will is not wholly dependent on the mind, but is separable from it; and, further, that knowledge exists as an abstraction. The will and mind are only servants for the soul's use, but so long as we are wrapped up in material life and do not admit that the real knower and only experiencer is the soul, just so long do these servants remain usurpers of the soul's sovereignty. Hence it is stated in old Hindu works, that "the Soul is the friend of Self and also its enemy; and, that a man should raise the self by the self."

In other words there is a constant struggle between the lower and the Higher Self, in which the illusions of matter always wage war against the Soul, tending ever to draw downward the inner principles which, lying midway between the upper and the lower, are capable of reaching either salvation or damnation.

There is no reference in the Aphorisms to the will. It seems to be inferred, either as well understood and admitted, or as being one of the powers of soul itself and not to be discussed. Many old Hindu writers hold, and we incline to the same view, that Will is a spiritual power, function or attribute constantly present in every portion of the Universe. It is a colorless power, to which no quality of goodness or badness is to be assigned, but which may be used in whatever way man pleases. When considered as that which in ordinary life is called "will," we see its operation only in connection with the material body and mind guided by desire; looked at in respect to the hold by man upon life it is more recondite, because its operation is beyond the ken of the mind; analyzed as connected with reincarnation of man or with the persistence of the manifested universe throughout a Manvantara, it is found to be still more removed from our comprehension and vast in its scope.

In ordinary life it is not man's servant, but, being then guided solely by desire, it makes man a slave to his desires. Hence the old cabalistic maxim, "Behind Will stands Desire." The desires always drawing the man hither and thither, cause him to commit such actions and have such thoughts as form the cause and mould for numerous reincarnations, enslaving him to a destiny against which he rebels, and that constantly de-

stroys and re-creates his mortal body. It is an error to say of those who are known as strong-willed men, that their wills are wholly their servants, for they are so bound in desire that it, being strong, moves the will into action for the consummation of wished for ends. Every day we see good and evil men prevailing in their several spheres. To say that in one there is good, and in the other evil will is manifestly erroneous and due to mistaking will, the instrument or force, for desire that sets it in motion toward a good or bad purpose. But Patanjali and his school well knew that the secret of directing the will with ten times the ordinary force might be discovered if they outlined the method, and then bad men whose desires were strong and conscience wanting, would use it with impunity against their fellows; or that even sincere students might be carried away from spirituality when dazzled by the wonderful results flowing from a training of the will alone. Patanjali is silent upon the subject for this reason among others.

The system postulates that *Ishwara*, the spirit in man, is untouched by any troubles, works, fruit of works, or desires, and when a firm position is assumed with the end in view of reaching union with spirit through concentration, He comes to the aid of the lower self and raises it gradually to higher planes. In this process the Will by degrees is given a stronger and stronger tendency to act

upon a different line from that indicated by passion and desire. Thus it is freed from the domination of desire and at last subdues the mind itself. But before the perfection of the practice is arrived at the will still acts according to desire, only that the desire is for higher things and away from those of the material life. Book III is for the purpose of defining the nature of the perfected state, which is therein denominated *Isolation*.

Isolation of the Soul in this philosophy does not mean that a man is isolated from his fellows, becoming cold and dead, but only that the Soul is isolated or freed from the bondage of matter and desire, being thereby able to act for the accomplishing of the aim of Nature and Soul, including all souls of all men. Such, in the Aphorisms, is clearly stated to be the purpose. It has become the habit of many superficial readers and thinkers, to say nothing of those who oppose the Hindu philosophy, to assert that Jivanmuktas or Adepts remove themselves from all life of men, from all activity, and any participation in human affairs, isolating themselves on inaccessible mountains where no human cry can reach their ears. Such a charge is directly contrary to the tenets of the philosophy which prescribes the method and means for reaching such a state. These Beings are certainly removed from human observation, but, as the philosophy clearly states, they have

the whole of nature for their object, and this will include all living men. They may not appear to take any interest in transitory improvements or ameliorations, but they work behind the scenes of true enlightenment until such times as men shall be able to endure their appearance in mortal guise.

The term "knowledge" as used here has a greater meaning than we are accustomed to giving it. It implies full identification of the mind, for any length of time, with whatever object or subject it is directed to. Modern science and metaphysics do not admit that the mind can cognize outside of certain given methods and distances, and in most quarters the existence of soul is denied or ignored. It is held, for instance, that one cannot know the constituents and properties of a piece of stone without mechanical or chemical aids applied directly to the object; and that nothing can be known of the thoughts or feelings of another person unless they are expressed in words or acts. Where metaphysicians deal with soul they are vague and appear to be afraid of science, because it is not possible to analyze it and weigh its parts in a balance. Soul and Mind are reduced to the condition of limited instruments which take note of certain physical facts spread before them through mechanical aids. Or, in ethnological investigation, it is held that we can know such and such things about classes of men from ob-